

his readers with a systematic analysis of the plants on which the different larvæ feed, the name of each plant being accompanied by a list of the species which have been found on it.

The Entomologist's Annual for 1858. London. John Van Voorst. 12mo.

The Entomologist's Annual is another book for which the British entomologist is indebted to the energetic exertions of Mr. Stainton. It is now in the fourth year of its existence, and seems to us to have acquired more vigour since the appearance of the first of the series; that is to say, the editor appears to have given up somewhat of his original notion, that in order to obtain success, an Entomological Annual must contain a certain amount of light matter, which, unfortunately, has too general a tendency to degenerate into trash.

In the 'Annual' for 1858 we meet with scarcely an indication of this, the greater part of its contents being of a nature to be really interesting to the student of British Entomology.

Besides the usual lists of new British species of Coleoptera, Lepidoptera and Aculeate Hymenoptera, discovered in the course of the year just elapsed, contributed by Mr. Janson, the Editor, and Mr. F. Smith, we have a series of notes on British Geodephagous Beetles by the Rev. J. F. Dawson, and on the caterpillars of the Saw-flies by Mr. Westwood (the latter intended especially for the use of young collectors of Lepidoptera, to save them the trouble and mortification of rearing a number of supposed caterpillars and getting nothing but Saw-flies for their pains),—questions and enigmas upon points connected with the natural history of the Tineina, and other Lepidopterological questions,—and a most warlike paper, entitled "Notes on Ants'-Nest Beetles," by Mr. Janson (in continuation of an interesting memoir on the same subject in the 'Annual' for last year), in which some offending Coleopterists are attacked in a style worthy of the rival Eatanswill editors immortalized in the 'Pickwick Papers.'

But perhaps the most important paper in the volume is the "Synopsis of the British Planipennes," by Dr. Hagen, which contains short characters of all the known British genera and species of the true Neuroptera with a perfect metamorphosis, and also of a few European forms, which Dr. Hagen considers will probably be found in this country. The most important of these are the Ant-lions (*Myrmeleon*), one of which, it appears, was described by Barbut as a British insect; and the author thinks it by no means impossible "that Southern Ireland may possess the extraordinary *Nemoptera Lusitanica*." The last year's 'Annual' contained a "Synopsis of the British Dragon-flies," also from the pen of Dr. Hagen; and there can be no doubt that the publication of such papers as these must add greatly both to the usefulness and prosperity of this little book.

The Handbook of British Ferns. By T. MOORE, F.L.S.
Third Edition. London, 1857.

Four years since we noticed at some length the second edition of this excellent book, and it is therefore unnecessary to occupy much space in announcing the publication of this fourth edition, which possesses all the valuable qualities of its predecessor and has been carefully revised throughout. There is very little change in its author's opinion concerning the limits of species or nomenclature. The *Athyrium rhaticum* is again joined to *A. filix-femina*. *Lastræ Fœnisecii* takes the name of *L. æmula*, from the discovery that it is certainly the *Polypodium æmulum* of Aiton: thus the long controversy concerning the proper name of the plant is set at rest in a satisfactory manner.

But the most marked characteristic of this edition consists in the immense number of forms which are described in it. Most of these have very little interest for the botanist, although collected with avidity by the cultivator. Mr. Moore has usually pointed out with care which of the forms are deserving of botanical attention; nevertheless it seems to us that he might well have divided the several species into their true varieties (if we may so call them) and arranged under each the less definite forms. Thus the botanist would have benefited, without any injury to the cultivator.

As in the former editions, much attention is paid to the mode best adapted for the culture of the plants.

The book is our best work upon British Ferns, and will be useful to all those who take an interest in them.

PROCEEDINGS OF LEARNED SOCIETIES.

ZOOLOGICAL SOCIETY.

July 14, 1857.—Dr. Gray, F.R.S., V.P., in the Chair.

ON STOASTOMIDÆ AS A FAMILY, AND ON SEVEN PROPOSED NEW GENERA, SIXTY-ONE NEW SPECIES, AND TWO NEW VARIETIES FROM JAMAICA. BY THE HON. EDWARD CHITTY.

Stoastomidæ! When I first open my cabinet of this Family to the spectator, two observations are generally made. The one, "How minute! how could you trouble yourself with such specks! they are not worth seeing, for we cannot see them." Then follows, "Well, they are very wonderful; but how did you collect them?"

To the first observation I answer, "True, they are but specks, and have very much injured my eyesight; but they are worth seeing under the microscope; for they are worthy to rank, and must rank, in point of sculpture, with the most wonderful and beautiful shells known to conchologists, and most of them are most worthy of a sculptor's or designer's study." Among the *Helices*, *Pupæ*, *Achatinæ*, *Cylindrellæ*, *Bulimi*, &c. there are plenty of minute species almost microscopic, and interesting enough; but, under the microscope, these only improve in size, and no further beauties are unfolded, and little further interest is given to them by its use. The